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Short Stories For Evening Hours

NAMING THE BABY

My Aunt Emmeline wrapped in a Paisley shawl, reclined in the big wooden rocker with the landscape painted on the back panel. It made a deep impression on me, for it was the first time I had ever seen my aunt in anything like an easy attitude.

When she entertained the Dorcas Society, she sat down, but it was always on one of the straight-backed horsehair-covered chairs that precluded any idea of bodily relaxation. The rocking chair with the landscape was commonly used by my Uncle Alexander.

My Great-Aunt Busby, who wore a sage green garibaldi and bonnet coeval, occupied the only other easy chair. And Mrs. Pinkham, one of our neighbors, with her 14-year-old daughter Millie, sat next to her in the semi-circle about the stove, which included Cousin Truman Hallerday, Cousin Myrtle Jennings, Cousin Laura Hallerday, Mrs. Lem Grigsby and Otto Black, who stood fidgeting his hat and looking as if he would gladly go if he only knew how. On the bed was a bundle of quilts—one a silk patchwork, very splendid, and somewhere within the bundle was my very newest cousin.

"I s'pose you'll call him Habakkuk, after his gran'father Strake," said my great-aunt Busby. "If I had my say about it, though, I'd call him Orlando after your father. That's what you'd have been called if you hadn't been a girl. But don't let anything I say make you change your mind. We haven't either of us any money to leave. All we've done has been to raise you and do for you, and what's that?"

"Why, maw!" remonstrated my Aunt Emmeline. "The idea! As if you wouldn't have a great deal to say! But I wanted suthin' sort of"—My Aunt Emmeline paused.

"So would I, Mrs. Strake," said Mrs. Lem Grigsby, who seemed to understand. "I think Bertram would be real sweet, don't you?"

"It's a pretty name," said my Aunt Emmeline, "but—"

"I think it's just lovely," declared Millie, enthusiastically.

"It sounds Dutchy to me," snapped my Great-Aunt Busby. Then she happened to catch Otto's eye. "Not but what the Dutch is all right," she added hastily. "But seems to me that Orlando—"

"You might call him Bertram Orlando," suggested Mrs. Pinkham. "Bertram Orlando Strake. Wouldn't that sound good?" She beamed inquiringly on the gathering.

"I wish you'd name him Galahad," said Cousin Laura, with shining eyes. "In that book, Eyelids of the King, that you gave me, there was a knight named Galahad, and he was just lovely. Aunt Emmeline, won't you please name him Galahad?"

"They'd be callin' him a Gal, chuckled Truman. "Haw-haw!"

"Oh, hush you, True," said Myrtle Jennings. "You're always a plaguoin' somebody. I think Galahad's real tasty, myself."

"I like it, too," said my Aunt Emmeline. "But I haven't—"

"Lisbeth Turner—her you've heard me talk about—she called her oldest Wilfred," volunteered Mrs. Lem Grigsby. "Wilfred Chauncey. I don't hold with her callin' children them old Bible names just because their parents or their gran'parents had 'em. I think callin' a poor young one Zephaniah, or Doeg, like Doeg Simmons, is a sin and a shame. If I had children—"

"That's just it, maw," said my Great-Aunt Busby, with much asperity. "If you had children, you'd know a great deal more about 'em and what to name 'em than what you do now, and being as you haven't any, I think you might—"

"Why, maw!" exclaimed my Aunt Emmeline.

"Well, I think if anybody here had any say in the matter it would be me," said my Great-Aunt Busby, trembling a little. "Of course, I may be mistaken. I prob'ly am. I'm old-fashioned—like the Bible—but it certainly used to be that folks was told to honor their fathers and mothers that their days might be long in the land. That's in the Bible, too, though, and I suppose it's all foolishness. Still, if Orlando isn't a good enough name—"

"I guess it is better I shall be going," interrupted Otto, desperately. "Good-bye!" and he was gone.

There was a laugh at that. "I guess

Mr. Black was afraid we were going to fight," said Mrs. Lem Grigsby, good-naturedly. "I didn't mean any harm, Mrs. Busby, maw," she continued. "Maybe I was a little free putting in my oar."

"It was me that was too techy, maw," returned my great-aunt, magnanimously. "We won't say no more about it."

"Tell you what, Emmeline," broke in Cousin Truman Hallerday. "If you want to call the little tyke after me I'll put \$50 to his credit in the bank for a nest egg. What do you say?"

My Aunt Emmeline did not seem to be overwhelmed by this offer, which I then regarded as princely. "I'd like to, the best kind, True," she said, "but—but I thought some of naming him Reginald, but—"

"Oh, don't you like Galahad, Aunt Emmeline?" cried Laura, in a disappointed tone.

"Or Bertram?" pouted Millie.

"I like Wilfred, for my part," said Mrs. Pinkham. "Of course, I ain't namin' him, though."

"I thought it was time to express myself, so I said that I was in favor of Chauncey."

My Aunt Emmeline looked a little flurried. "I like Bertram and Galahad and Wilfred and I like Chauncey," she said, "but—"

"But what?" asked my Great-Aunt Busby.

"I haven't talked it over with Mr. Strake yet," said my Aunt Emmeline.

"Here he is now," said Truman Hallerday. "Alick, we've been a-namin' the baby. We're a-goin' to call him Bertram Galahad Wilfred Chauncey Reginald Strake. What d'ye think of that?"

My Uncle Alexander retreated to the kitchen and opened the outer door wide enough to spit through. Then he returned to the bedroom.

"He's a-goin' to be called Bill," said my Uncle Alexander. "B I double L, Bill."

And my cousin's name is Bill.

RUSSIA WAITS

OTHER VERDICTS

Would Fully Agree to Move Proposed by United States as Regard the Manchurian Railway.

ST. PETERSBURG, Jan. 6.—The Foreign Office has taken no action on the memorandum presented by the United States relative to the neutralization of the Manchurian railroads, which has been submitted for a careful examination jointly by the Ministers of Finance and War.

The ultimate attitude of Russia will depend largely upon the reception of the proposals by the other powers, and the developments in this matter necessarily will consume much time. The leading official of the Foreign Office today said that the proposals were not regarded in any sense as unfriendly or unwelcome, but would be approached from the standpoint of practical possibilities and given attention commensurate with the magnitude of the political, economic and military questions involved.

As Russia's policy in the Far East is defensive, and not aggressive, certain features outlined in the memorandum are decidedly advantageous, but the success or failure of the proposals will be determined largely by the attitude of Japan, whose portion of the railroads is vital to the scheme.

LONDON, Jan. 6.—Great Britain has not given as yet a formal reply to the proposal of the United States for the neutralization of the Manchurian railroad, though it has not been received unsympathetically. It has been felt here for some time that the railway situation in Manchuria was one of the most dangerous elements in Far Eastern politics, and, in common with the United States, Great Britain would be gratified to see the question settled.

However, it is realized that Russia and Japan are more vitally interested in the subject, and while the Foreign Office would suggest to her ally, and also to Russia, the acceptance of some such proposal as that made by the government of the United States, the British government is not disposed to press the matter.

Nevertheless, a fuller consideration will be given the subject when the Ministers of the Cabinet are relieved from the duties imposed upon them by the present campaign.

HOW GROCE AND CANNON DIED

Led Out to Be Shot November 16—Center of Firing Squad—Sentence Read—Both Try to Prevent Blindfold Over Eyes.

MANAGUA, Jan. 5.—Recent reports that Groce and Cannon, the American recruits in the insurgent army who were put to death at the command of President Zalaya were tortured before being shot are untrue. The facts were in the possession of the State Department at Washington a month ago and it was generally supposed here that the details of the tragedy had been given publicity through official channels. As it is, advantage has been taken of the opportunity, in some instances, to paint a picture that was more interesting than truthful. The glory of Captain Anibal Chaves, who refused to obey an order to take command of the firing squad, is dimmed somewhat by the light of known circumstances. General's Toledo, Medina and Irias had implored Zalaya to abandon his purpose of shooting the Americans. Zalaya, however, could not be influenced and General Toledo finally ordered Captain Chaves not to assume command of the squad. Chaves chose to obey Toledo rather than the president and as a consequence was arrested and held in jail for six weeks. Upon his release Chaves made the most of the episode and no arrival from the United States is long left in ignorance of the details.

It is also untrue that a meeting of peace commissions appointed by Madrid and Estrada has been arranged for Saturday.

Groce and Cannon were notified of the death sentence imposed upon them at 10:30 o'clock on the night of November 15. They were executed at ten o'clock the following morning. As they were marched out of the fortress a drizzle of rain fell. On the way to the scene of execution they passed the open grave that had been prepared for them. At one time Groce stepped out of the line of march and pleaded with General Medina, "Do not shoot me, I am a brother Mason." Cannon quickly seized his companion and pulling him back into the line said: "Brace up, old man. We have no chance under Zalaya's orders."

Standing in the center of the square formed by one hundred soldiers, the two men heard their sentence read from the four corners, with the usual warning in such cases, "Anyone displaying evidence of sympathy will be shot in a similar fashion."

The hands of the condemned men were bound and their eyes blindfolded. Cannon shook his head, attempting to prevent the blind being placed over his face, but his protest was unavailing. They were seated on a low bench, side by side. The firing squad was made up of twelve soldiers, who advanced in three rows within six feet of their victims. Captain Constantino Suenz was in command and instructed two soldiers at the right to fire upon Groce and two soldiers at the left to fire upon Cannon. All four bullets were effective. Groce was shot through the heart and death was instantaneous. The bullets intended for Cannon tore the breast and abdomen. He survived his wounds a few seconds. When the body of Groce was buried a blanket hid the features, but the body of Cannon was hurled without any protecting cover.

TESLA WOULD LIGHT UP WITHOUT WIRES

NEW YORK, Jan. 5.—Nikola Tesla, who has been at work on a "wireless electric light" for 20 years, announced yesterday that he has practically brought it to a state of perfection. He says a plant for its production is now nearing completion at his laboratory on Long Island.

"It would be possible by my wireless transmitter of great power," said Mr. Tesla, "to light the entire United States. The current would pass into the air, and, spreading in all directions, produce the effect of a strong aurora borealis. It would be a soft light, but sufficient to distinguish objects. Some day soon my idea will be carried out. I would like nothing better than to undertake to illuminate first the harbor of New York for a distance of, say, 100 miles around."

"My present plan is to distribute this light from a central station, which is the most economical and also the best method of obtaining light of higher quality. My lamps will last forever, there being nothing in them to burn out. They are simply tubes or bulbs of glass, hermetically sealed and containing nothing but rarefied gas."

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Architects are asked for competitive plans for the new Y. M. C. A. building. See Paul Super for details. 4520-3f

Clean wiping rags at the Bulletin office. 4521-3f

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